DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 370 748 RC 019 647

AUTHOR	Hoyt-Goldsmith, Diane
TITLE	Day of the Dead: A Mexican-American Celebration.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-8234-1094-3
PUB DATE	94
NOTE	32p.; Photographs by Lawrence Migdale.
AVAILABLE FROM	Holiday House, Inc., 425 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10017 ($15.95).
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Guides - Classroom Use - Instructional Materials (For Learner) (051)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	American Indians; Ancient History; Art Activities; *Childrens Literature; *Cultural Activities; Dance; *Hispanic American Culture; *Mexican Americans; Music Activities; *Religious Holidays
IDENTIFIERS	Aztec (People); California (Sacramento); *Dia de los Muertos

ABSTRACT

This children's book describes how a Mexican-American family celebrates the traditional Mexican holiday, Day of the Dead (Dia de Muertos). The book centers on 10-year-old twins, Ximena and Azucena, who live in Sacramento, California, with their two brothers, older sister, and parents. The Day of the Dead takes place on the first and second day of November and honors relatives and friends who have died. The holiday celebrates their spiritual return to Earth to share a special feast with the living, and has roots in the ancient history of Mexico and in the beliefs of the Aztecs. In 1974, the twins' father helped to revive this traditional celebration in Sacramento. The celebration begins at home where the whole family works together to create an alter or "ofrenda" to honor the departed souls of relatives. The alter consists of Mexican food, flowers, clothing, holiday decorations, and photographs. The twins' father, who is also an artist, helps his family make skeleton masks to be worn on the second day during the procession to the cemetery. At the end of the procession, there is a large ofrenda, built by the people in the community to honor all the dead. Later, a priest from the Catholic church comes to perform a Mass in Spanish. Traditional dancing and music is also an important aspect of the celebration. The twins reflect on the meaning of their participation in the holiday and how it puts them in touch with the values of traditional Mexican culture and the religion of their ancestors. Contains photographs, a glossary, and an index. (LP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****